

“From a quarter so totally unexpected”: translation of the Early Church Fathers in Victorian Scotland*

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It is one of the ironies of the information-technology revolution that it has given a new lease of life to the old and the superseded. To give two examples from Calvin studies, it is the translation of his *Institutio* done by Henry Beveridge and published in Edinburgh in 1845-46 that is freely available on CD Rom, and not the one by Ford Lewis Battles in the Library of Christian Classics set in 1960. Similarly those who prefer the screen to the page have ready access to the mid-nineteenth-century translation of Calvin’s New Testament commentaries, published in Edinburgh by the Calvin Translation Society between 1844 and 1855, rather than to the Oliver and Boyd version edited by D.W. and T.F. Torrance that first appeared, also in Edinburgh, between 1959 and 1972. The reason is of course that no copyright restriction limits what producers of computer-carried forms may do with works from the mid-nineteenth century.

So it is that the Ante-Nicene Christian Library (ANCL for short) is now experiencing something of a revival. It was published by T&T Clark in Edinburgh in twentyfour volumes between 1867 and 1872, with a supplementary volume in 1897. The editors’ intention announced in volume 1 was to include all the extant works of the Fathers down to the Council of Nicaea in 325, with the sole provisional exception of the bulkier works of Origen. At that time they planned to provide only *Contra Celsum* and *De Principiis* of Origen’s corpus, but if the undertaking succeeded, they would give readers the whole of it.

That the editors so nearly fulfilled their intentions distinguishes the ANCL from the two parallels in Calvin’s writings. For unlike the latter’s *Institutio* and New Testament commentaries, no subsequent translation of the early Fathers into English has yet come near to matching ANCL’s virtual completeness. That in itself is a compliment of a kind to its nineteenth-century creators, described by a recent writer

* In tribute to Professor Alec Cheyne, in gratitude and high regard.

as “the Victorian gentlemen from Edinburgh”.¹ It is not, however, degree of the completeness but freedom from copyright that explains why a new generation of computer-bound scholars is bringing the ANCL volumes back into common use. Not so long ago some of them would have found their way into a library to consult the considerable range of more recent translations of one or other ante-Nicene Christian writer, in series like *Ancient Christian Writers* or *Fathers of the Church*, or in collections such as the *Library of Christian Classics*, or in individual volumes. Some at least of these are more scholarly and readable than their counterparts in the ANCL.

The publication of this patristic enterprise in Edinburgh directed by two Scottish editors occasioned interest that appears variously surprised, patronising and in the event warmly commendatory. The *Bookseller* in September 1865 announced that “A New Library of the Fathers” was in progress “[f]rom Presbyterian Scotland, of all places in the world the last from whence [sic] we should expect such a movement”, to be entitled the *Library of the Ante-Nicene Fathers*. After quoting the publishers’ prospectus on the guidelines the series would follow, the *Bookseller* ended with this comment:

Dr Pusey and his friends, who for the last twenty-five years have been so actively engaged in the promotion of Patristic studies, must indeed be gratified to find their work so ably supplemented from a quarter so totally unexpected.²

The journal noted the appearance of volumes in the series, generally two at a time, with some regularity. The first two merited the accolade that “the series of works now undertaken is of the utmost interest and importance to all sections of Christians”.³ On volumes 3 and 4, the *Bookseller* took up again the significance of publication in Scotland. “English Episcopalians”, it averred, “would naturally support such a work”, but if it had been published by Parker, Masters or Rivington, few Independents, Baptists, Wesleyans, or Presbyterians would have

¹ Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity* (Princeton, 1996), xiv.

² *Bookseller* XCIII/737 (30 Sept. 1865), 584. On the Library of the Fathers, see H P Liddon, *Life of Edward Bouverie Pusey*, 4 vols. (London, 1893-7), i, 409-47; R.W. Pfaff, “The Library of the Fathers: The Tractarians as Patristic Translators”, *Studies in Philology*, 70 (1973), 329-44.

³ *Bookseller*, CVIII/752 (31 Dec. 1866), 1342.

encouraged it. Coming from a Presbyterian country, the various authors announced for publication would naturally be brought before the notice of a large and intelligent community of non-episcopalian tendencies.⁴ In 1869 on June 1, the *Bookseller* applauded the regularity with which four volumes had been issued each year, “according to promise”. It afforded

a favourable contrast with the dilatory manner in which the Oxford amateurs issued their “Library of the Fathers”, the incompleteness of which is discreditable to its managers. Would it not be well for Dr Pusey and his associates to make some arrangement with Messrs Clark for amalgamation with the “Ante-Nicene Library”?⁵

When the last two volumes, 23 and 24, came out on time in 1872, the *Bookseller* hailed “A most creditable series of translations – creditable alike to publishers and translators ... well supported and thoroughly successful”.⁶

Whether it was successful economically, the *Bookseller* could not know, nor do the extant records of the firm, exhaustively mined by John Dempster for *The T. & T. Clark Story. A Victorian Publisher and the New Theology* (1992), allow a conclusive answer. But it seems unlikely, first because the subscription price of £6 6s 0d was set on the assumption of sixteen volumes and the collection ran, as we have seen, to twentyfour – which meant that subscribers got each volume for 5s 3d., not much more than the trade price of 4s 9d.⁷ When detailed figures can be scrutinised, for the four years beginning 1895-96, Dempster concludes that

the Clarks were proceeding with the Series because of its theological value, and almost in spite of financial considerations. That the *Ante-Nicene Library* was highly

⁴ *Ibid.*, CXIV/758 (29 June 1867), 433.

⁵ *Ibid.*, CXXXVII (1 June 1869), 470.

⁶ *Ibid.*, CLXXV (13 July 1872), 542.

⁷ J.A.H. Dempster, *The T.&T. Clark Story. A Victorian Publisher and the New Theology* (Durham, 1992), 45-6.

praised would no doubt have provided some consolation, but praise could not be guaranteed to ensure profitability.⁸

From the *Bookseller* it got praise to the very end. In February 1880 it cropped up in an item on “The Literature of Tractarianism”. Pusey and his colleagues perceived the strategic value of the press, and hence issued series like the Library of the Fathers. Given the guiding principles of the Tractarian movement, it was on the one hand important to show how things lay early on and on the other hand prudent to limit the selection to the period before “theological opinions presumably of universal acceptance might be found to be tainted with local error, and more especially of Roman innovation”. Hence the large place occupied by Chrysostom in the Library, for he “had not the remotest tincture of Roman influence about him”, and “his opinions regarding sacerdotalism” were closely in accord with the editors. The volume of selections from Ephraim had to be published separately from the series because between translation and publication the translator, J.B. Morris, had converted to Rome.⁹

The Library of the Fathers, whose controversial banner flew from its masthead from the very first, conditioned the *Bookseller* to read the Ante-Nicene Christian Library, “[p]erhaps the most remarkable outcome of Patristic theology”, in similar terms.

⁸ Dempster, *The T. & T. Clark Story*, 47.

⁹ *Bookseller*, CCLXVII (3 Feb. 1880), 106a-c. Pfaff argues, “The Library of the Fathers”, 342-3, that not Morris’s defection to Rome but “a squabble over a note” on which Morris proved immovable caused the volume’s withdrawal from the series, but the evidence he gives does not sustain this reading. The note inserted in another volume (St Augustine, *Seventeen Short Treatises*, tr. C.L. Cornish, H. Browne, 1847, 2) attributes its withdrawal to “a sorrowful event [which] happened” when the last sheets and indices were “in the press”. Pusey himself in the actual volume (*Select Works of S. Ephrem the Syrian*, 1847, v) states: “The circumstances under which the present Work appears, seem to require silence rather than explanation. It was commenced several years ago; it was finished and in type before the English Church lost its translator.” Although Pusey goes on to refer to the note in question (p. vii), he nowhere links it with the withdrawal. Since each volume bore the Library’s general title-page declaring it to be “Translated by Members of the English Church”, the fact that “the English Church lost its translator”, as Pusey deliberately expressed it, would seem to require such action. Only this makes sense of “a sorrowful event”.

Designed for Presbyterian and Nonconformist bodies in this country and America, it was necessary, as much as possible, to exclude, not only Roman novelties, but the Episcopal element also.¹⁰

Hence its limitation, in the *Bookseller*'s mind, to pre-Nicene authors only, an inference which revealed nothing so much as the limitations of the *Bookseller*'s mind. He had not read, one must conclude, the volumes of Cyprian or the Apostolic Constitutions, or several others in the collection including Irenaeus. In 1866 when reviewing the Apostolic Fathers in volume 1, the *Bookseller* found that Polycarp's *Epistle* "contains no statement or doctrine which any member of the Church of England could object to".¹¹ In respect of Ignatius's surely "Episcopal" letters, this volume reflected the unsettled state of scholarly opinion following the publication in 1845 by William Cureton of a Syriac manuscript containing only three genuine letters. The translators included these three "after the Syriac version", preceded by the shorter and the longer versions of the seven epistles set out in parallel columns. The *Bookseller* was reduced to commenting hopefully, "Could the writings be proved genuine, many disputed questions would be authoritatively solved".¹² J.B. Lightfoot, bishop of Durham, would furnish that proof in 1885.

After so naively identifying the Ante-Nicene Library's anti-episcopal interest, the *Bookseller* had to account for T&T Clark's sixteen-volume edition of Augustine, edited by Marcus Dods of the Free Church's New College. Despite living long after Nicaea, Augustine was claimed "by the theologians of certain Protestant schools as the earliest champion of their opinions on the doctrine of grace". It might equally have said "of certain Catholic schools", similarly in the plural. The *Bookseller* failed to explain why Peter Holmes was allowed to dedicate volume 7 of ANCL to the Bishop of Chester, William Jacobson, and volume 15 to Walter Trower, former Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway. Nor did it notice the list of some twenty distinguished subscribers which Clark appended to volumes 4 and 13, bristling with three archbishops, eleven bishops and four other

¹⁰ *Bookseller*, CCLXVII (3 Feb. 1880), 106c.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, CVIII/752 (31 Dec. 1866), 1341.

¹² *Ibid.*

Anglican clergy. The sole lay subscribers mentioned were Scots nobles.

At any rate, the *Bookseller*'s final plaudit was delivered with as much grace as it could muster:

It is due to Messrs Clark to say that we have never heard a word against the faithfulness of their translations; apparently no attempt was made to tone down any of the Fathers, although some of their writings must have been found extremely unpalatable to many of the subscribers.¹³

We should be grateful to the *Bookseller* for enlightening us on the apologetic interests of the Ante-Nicene Christian Library, since neither the publishers nor the editors were so good as to tell us themselves. The comparison with the Tractarians' Library of the Fathers, which was inaugurated in 1838 with Pusey's edition of Augustine's *Confessions*, no doubt suggested itself, although I have found no explicit evidence that the Scottish venture was designed to complement or counterbalance the English series. The *Bookseller*'s Anglo-centric, or Anglicano-centric, prejudice is reflected still in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, which has an entry on the Library of the Fathers but not on the Ante-Nicene Christian Library or on either of its editors or on Marcus Dods.

In the last two volumes of the original series, volumes 23 and 24 published in 1872, the publishers' Notice to Subscribers announces the next four volumes now ready in the works of Augustine and is glad to report that a uniform translation of the works of Chrysostom is "in contemplation". Similarly in volume 14 of the Augustine series in 1876 it is declared that "The Editor and Publishers ... trust to be able shortly to announce their arrangements for the publication of at least a large portion of the WRITINGS OF ST CHRYSOSTOM". The fifteenth and final volume in the same year presents T&T Clark hoping "shortly to issue their Prospectus of the Works of St Chrysostom". There, however, the trail goes cold. What did Clark have in mind, given that the Library of the Fathers had produced by 1852 fifteen volumes of Chrysostom's homilies (with a sixteenth in 1877), all but one on the New Testament? How far was Marcus Dods, the editor of the Augustine collection, really involved in the planning of a similar

¹³ *Ibid.*, CCLXVII (3 Feb. 1880), 106c.

Chrysostom set? Was the Edinburgh publisher intending to go it alone, or in conjunction with an American company? At the Scottish end nothing came of the intention, while in the USA the Christian Literature Publishing Company, in New York from 1888, devoted volumes 9-14 of its *Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (1888-90) to Chrysostom, nearly all of it barely revised reprinting of the Library of the Fathers translations.¹⁴ Since Clark contested the American company's right in producing in effect pirated editions of both the Ante-Nicene Library and the Augustinian collection,¹⁵ it is difficult to believe that the firm had anything of the kind in mind itself for the Oxford Chrysostom volumes. Nor would duplication by fresh translation have made much sense.¹⁶ Perhaps the plan was to cover Chrysostom's Old Testament homilies, which have had to wait until the late twentieth century for English translation to begin. Philip Schaff simply put the abandonment of the project down to "want of encouragement".¹⁷ Whatever the reason was, we have no grounds for reading into the unfulfilled announcement an interest in rivalling or countering Pusey's Library of the Fathers.

The editors' own intentions set down in the *Prospectus* and largely reproduced in a note in the first volume aspired to rise above partisanship. With the sole exception of some of Origen, "all the Christian writings antecedent to the Nicene Council have been put into the hands of competent translators"; "only works which are now allowed by all parties to belong entirely to a later date, will be excluded". The translators

will make it their first and principal aim to produce translations as faithful as possible, uncoloured by any bias,

¹⁴ R.W. Pfaff, "Anglo-American Patristic Translations 1866-1900", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 28 (1977), 39-55, at 50-51. In the context of this paper, "Anglo-" merits notice.

¹⁵ Dempster, *The T.&T. Clark Story*, 112-15.

¹⁶ When T&T Clark announced the contents of their planned Augustine collection, in ANCL vol. 15 in 1870, the Sermons and Commentaries on the Psalms were specifically excluded, "at least in the first instance", because the Oxford Translators had provided them, yet the Lectures on John's Gospel and Epistle, also likewise provided, were included without comment.

¹⁷ *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. P. Schaff, i: *The Confessions and Letters of St Augustin* (Buffalo, NY, 1886), vi.

dogmatic or ecclesiastical. They will also endeavour, in brief notes, to place the English reader in the position of those acquainted with the original languages. They will indicate important variations in the text; they will give different translations of the same passage where more than one have been proposed; they will note the various meanings attributed to the words in ecclesiastical controversies; and when the ancient documents appear in widely different forms, the various forms will be presented. At the same time, they will strive to combine with this strict accuracy and faithfulness as much elegance as may be consistent with the main aim.

The notice of this *Prospectus* in the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review* highlighted the significance of the project in its own terms. Since in many of the questions now agitating the churches frequent reference was made to the testimonies of the early Fathers, especially prior to the Council of Nicaea, enquiring minds would no longer be content to accept citations at second hand. The original writings “have hitherto been to the Christian public almost wholly sealed books, written for the most part in cramp Latin or crabbed Greek, abounding with obscurities and inaccuracies which puzzle even the scholar”. Translations produced so far have been “selected for ecclesiastical purposes”, “but a complete library of their writings, undertaken by parties at once competent and important, is still a desideratum”.¹⁸

Yet the *Bookseller* was on safer ground in its surprise at the provenance of the translation. Scotland cannot boast a distinguished tradition of patristic study, although the story has been little investigated. I have myself published an essay on John Knox and the early Fathers,¹⁹ and have another one on the Fathers in the Scottish Reformation awaiting publication. The returns are not abundant, which will surprise no student of the period. Although it is, I think, true that no edition or translation of any patristic work was published in Scotland by 1700, many lines of enquiry remain to be pursued.

¹⁸ “Prospectus of the Ante-Nicene Christian Fathers”, *British and Foreign Evangelical Review* 15 (1866), 413-14, at 413.

¹⁹ “John Knox and the Early Church Fathers”, in *John Knox and the British Reformations*, ed. R.A. Mason (Aldershot, 1998), 99-116.

Surprise that a Scottish publisher should give birth to a translation of the pre-Nicene Fathers should have been tempered by taking account of the scholarly serious name T&T Clark had been winning for itself with the Foreign Theological Library. More than one periodical in welcoming the forthcoming ANCL introduced its publishers as the house already distinguished "by their many valuable translations from the rich stores of biblical literature in Germany".²⁰ The Foreign Theological Library thus ensured a respectful expectation of a scholarly translation of patristic writings from Messrs Clark.

To others the names of its two editors were sufficient guarantee of its quality. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson are not now of repute among students of the Fathers except when their responsibility for the ANCL is brought to mind. Roberts' name always appears first, which must indicate his role as the senior editor. Yet if the initiative lay with Roberts rather than Donaldson, that would be surprising, since all of Roberts' other work lay in New Testament while Donaldson wrote on the early church, among other subjects. In fact, the series owed its inception to neither of its scholarly editors nor its well-regarded publisher, but to a Leither, a layman managing the family's sugar-refining business while active in the early years of the Evangelical Alliance, a strong supporter of foreign missions and a future Member of Parliament. His versatility helps to explain, if not excuse, the selectiveness of most summary accounts of his life. None of the sources of first resort on Robert Andrew Macfie (1811-93) mentions his contribution as initiator of the Ante-Nicene Christian Library.²¹

²⁰ *Reformed Presbyterian Magazine*, 1 March 1866, 107; cf. *Bibliotheca Sacra* 26 (1869), 386-7.

²¹ *DNB*; F. Boase, *Modern English Biography*, 6 vols. (Truro, 1892-1921), ii, 599; M. Stenton, *Who's Who of British Members of Parliament*, i: 1832-1885 (Hassocks, Sussex, 1976), 251; *Scotsman*, 18 Feb. 1893, 8; *British Weekly*, 23 Feb. 1893, 290; *Men and Women of the Time. A Dictionary of Contemporaries*, 13th edn., ed. G. Washington Moon (London, 1891), 590; J.C. Irons, *Leith and its Antiquities*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1897-8), ii, 487-91. In 1857-8 Macfie founded Parkgate Presbyterian Church, Neston, Cheshire: C.C. Lundie, *The Story of the Presbyterian Church of England at Parkgate and Neston 1858-1933* (Manchester, 1933), 7-21. This is now Neston United Reformed Church, whose minister, the Rev. William Wright, was kind enough to send me copies of entries concerning Macfie in the congregation's

Macfie's name appeared in no volume of the Library nor in any of T&T Clark's publicity, yet it was disclosed at the outset. In its issue of 17 June 1865, the *Weekly Review* announced the forthcoming translations from Clark under the superintendence of Donaldson and Roberts and added: "We understand that the scheme originates with our liberal and public-spirited friend, R.A. Macfie, Esq., Liverpool".²² Roberts sent off to the paper an immediate correction of its erroneous restriction of the project to the Apostolic Fathers. The complete treasury of pre-Nicene Christian antiquity was to be

given to the public on terms which place them within the reach of all. Mr Macfie has done himself great and lasting honour by having rendered such a publication possible, and will secure by his intelligent munificence the gratitude of many generations. If carried out, as all must hope it will be, this noble enterprise will prove to its originator a monument "aere perennius".²³

But the ANCL has not gone down in history as Macfie's monument. Indeed, nowhere else in print is he linked with the Library except in an unattributed short biography in the *Biograph and Review* in 1879.

oldest records from 1868 to 1871. The National Library of Scotland has a collection of letters received by Macfie 1828-57 (Acc. 8605), and Glasgow University Archives hold an extensive and well-organised deposit of Macfie family papers 1709-1940 with much on Robert Macfie (DC 120), henceforth cited as GUA.

²² *Weekly Review*, vii, 147 (17 June 1865), 196. (This elusive journal's full title is *The London and Edinburgh Weekly Review of Religion, Politics, Literature, Science, and Art.*) I owe my knowledge of this report, which first set me on the track of Macfie, to Mrs Margaret Thompson, administrator of the United Reformed Church History Society, at Westminster College, Cambridge. She provided me with a file of material on Alexander Roberts (compiled by the secretary of the Presbyterian History Society, W.B. Shaw, in 1918-19), and with other useful information on some translators.

²³ *Weekly Review*, vii, 147 (24 June 1865), vii. A corrected version of the *Weekly Review*'s June 17 report appeared in *English Presbyterian Messenger*, 211 (1 July 1865), 226.

Seeing and feeling the want of a complete collection, in the English tongue, of primitive Christian writings, he arranged with Messrs. Clark, special publishers, of Edinburgh, and with Dr Roberts, Professor of Latin in St Andrews University, and Dr Donaldson, Rector of the Edinburgh High School, authors of important works in the field of theology and criticism, to have the strange desideratum supplied. To him, accordingly, the Churches are indebted for the ante-Nicene Christian Library, copies of which are presented to such missionary institutions as appear to deserve particularly this consideration.²⁴

Published in his retirement but long before his death, this account must depend on information supplied by Macfie himself. It puts his initiative in the origination of the translation project, including the recruitment of the two editors, beyond doubt.²⁵

Macfie's choice of editors and publishers proved remarkably well-judged. Hardly any of his letters and papers have survived, nor any correspondence from Roberts or Donaldson to him.²⁶ But the letterbooks of T&T Clark preserved in the National Library of Scotland include copies of a number from the firm to Macfie. They mostly concern the financial relationships between the two, which in the event left both parties feeling aggrieved. Unfortunately the earlier

²⁴ *Biograph and Review* 2 (July-Dec. 1879), 61-4, at 63. This paragraph appeared also at the same time in the *New Monthly Magazine*, 116, n.s.1 (1879), 936-8, at 937, in a shortened version of the *Biograph and Review* presentation of Macfie, with very little fresh information but with a photograph.

²⁵ It misleads in describing Roberts as Professor of Latin at St Andrews, which he became only in 1872, after the 24-volume ANCL was complete.

²⁶ According to the loose and selective account of his father, *John Macfie of Edinburgh and His Family* (privately [Edinburgh], 1938), by his (Robert's) grandson, John William Scott Macfie (on whom see *Who Was Who*, 1941-1950), of the untidy mass of papers Robert left on his death in 1893 little was left in 1925, when his grandson took possession. His preface (vii-xi) is a distressingly carefree record of destruction and neglect of a significant Victorian family's documentary legacy. GUA, DC 120.1/23 is a catalogue of the Dreghorn library much reduced by 1897. Made by James Thin Booksellers, it invariably lists the Ante-Nicene Library.

letters are all but illegible because the ink has run on the thin copy paper. This is sadly the case with most of a three-page "Minute of Agreement between R A Macfie Esq. and T & T Clark Publishers, regarding an edition of the Ante-Nicene Fathers", of 4 (?) March 1865.²⁷ This is the first extant letter from Clark to Macfie. It itemises estimated costs under three headings totalling £4180, for sixteen volumes of some 500 pages each, but how the costs were to be borne, if stipulated, cannot now be satisfactorily deciphered. The presumption must be that a major part of these costs, at least half and perhaps the whole, fell to the account of Macfie.

The illegibility of much of this letter and minute is rendered less disabling by Clark's letter to Macfie on 21 April 1866:

We agree to cancel the agreement between you and us in the matter of the Ante Nicene Christian Library (excepting the condition as to the Index Volume), in consideration of your purchasing four hundred sets, at three pounds per set, which shall be given away by you entirely abroad, except to the extent of thirty copies; and the option on our part, of adding another hundred sets, to be paid by you at the same rate and to be by you distributed among Public Institutions in this country or abroad.²⁸

Payment was to be made in cash on publication of each volume at the rate of 3s 6d. The letterbooks contain several invoices to Macfie for £140, for 400 copies of a couple of volumes at this price.

Macfie's total outlay was thus to be £1200, or £1500 at most. Had he originally agreed to furnish £4180, or half of this sum? The new agreement lasted, but failed to allow for the original miscalculation (blamed by Clark on Donaldson) that sixteen volumes would suffice. Twentyfour were needed, but the new agreement of April 1866 seems clearly to commit Clark to supplying complete sets for £3 each "without reference to number of volumes" – and it fails to mention

²⁷ NLS, Dep. 247/29, 617, 619-20 (618 has been removed, nor can I tell whether it was originally part of a four-page document). The actual minute of agreement is on 620, much of 619 is badly faded (not a common fault), on 617 the two editors' names can be read.

²⁸ NLS, Dep. 247/29, 675. Another letter followed not long after the minute of agreement, *ibid.*, 623-4, but I could make out too little to get the drift.

completion in sixteen volumes. What happened can be deduced from Clark's letter to Macfie's heir, John William Macfie, a month after Macfie's death. The agreement envisaged the supply of 400 sets of sixteen volumes each, a total of 6400. Macfie had received 295 sets of twentyfour each, i.e. 7080, an excess of 680.²⁹

The trouble was that Macfie had been billed, volume by volume, for 400 sets, up to a maximum total price per set of £3. Apart from 100 sets, whose dispatch to R.L. Stuart, proprietor of a sugar refining company in New York, is the subject of several letters, the stock evidently remained in T&T Clark's hands until the delivery of a gift set to a qualifying institution was authorised. The availability of presentation sets on carefully stated terms was advertised in several of Macfie's own publications in the 1880s. The demand was not overwhelming, it seems, and the publisher in time unilaterally recalculated the multiplications. Already in a letter to Macfie of April 29, 1870, Clark broached the seriousness for the agreement between them of the overrun.³⁰ Yet letters of 1886 and 1887 reveal that no agreed resolution of the embarrassment had been reached. Reckoning from sixteen volumes per set, Macfie had already received 468 volumes more than the expected 6400.

Legally you can oblige us to deliver 113 sets still for the purposes originally contemplated, but, as neither you, nor we, nor Dr Donaldson ever supposed the series would extend to 8 more, ... we must throw ourselves on your sense of right to hold the matter closed ... by the delivery of 13 sets more (312 vols) to be used in any way you please.³¹

Eighteen months later Clark could only restate the position and "throw myself on that sense of justice which I have never found wanting in you". At the same time he insists that the restriction to missionary libraries must be adhered to with the occasional stretching of a point. Otherwise the firm's sales would be undermined.³² Macfie

²⁹ NLS, Dep. 247/37, 152; 16 March 1893.

³⁰ NLS, Dep. 247/29a, 362.

³¹ NLS, Dep. 247/34, 327-8; 5 April 1886.

³² NLS, Dep. 247/34, 873; 17 November 1887. Clark points out that Macfie was, per volume of the collection of twenty-four, paying less than the cost

had, so it appears, wished to extend his generosity to public libraries also, presumably citing the shortfall in the take-up of the 400 sets he believed he had paid for. But on his death in 1893, as Clark's letter to his eldest son already cited plainly shows, fewer than 300 sets had been sent out. Macfie's will, dated 4 May 1892, instructed his trustees to "continue such distribution until the said purchased copies or sets are exhausted" and also to fulfil any commitment by him to the production of an index volume of the series.³³

None of this correspondence throws any light on Macfie's interest in the early church Fathers, or on his spotting the lack of a comprehensive translation. Nor is much of relevance to be learned from what is known of the rest of his life. He was born at the Kirkgate, Leith, on 4 October 1811, into a sugar-refining family.³⁴ His grandfather had started the business at Greenock in 1788. For various periods it operated also in Leith, Edinburgh (where Sugarhouse Close in the Canongate recalls the location) and Liverpool. Its main refinery in Liverpool lasted almost a century until the firm was bought out by Tate & Lyle in 1938. Robert was named partly after his uncle, whose wife was the sister of the novelist, John Galt. As chief magistrate of Leith his father John was prominent in welcoming George IV to Scotland in 1822. Robert grew up amid commercial interests, public affairs and literary circles.

He attended the high schools of both Leith and Edinburgh and then Edinburgh University (1825-27), without graduating. In July 1834 he recorded his inconclusive reflections on his applying for ordained ministry.³⁵ After entering the family business he spent a few years (1835-38) in Glasgow as agent for the National Bank of Scotland before moving to Liverpool to establish a new refinery. Here he spent most of his active business life, retiring at the end of October 1867. In 1862 he bought seventeenth-century Dreghorn Castle, next to Colinton

price. Macfie's advertisements of free sets sometimes gave the selling price as six guineas.

³³ GUA, DC 120.2/3, 6.

³⁴ George Fairrie, *The Sugar Refining Families of Great Britain* (London and Liverpool, 1961), xi, 17-22; J.W.S. Macfie, *John Macfie*; accounts cited above in notes 21, 24.

³⁵ GUA, DC 120.5/7/8, "Prospects in life".

immediately south of Edinburgh, whither he removed in 1871.³⁶ For some fifteen years previously he lived at Ashfield Hall, Neston, Cheshire. He died at Dreghorn on 16 February 1893.³⁷

Robert Macfie's energies touched many interests.³⁸ He was member of Parliament for Leith Burghs 1868-74 (he stood unsuccessfully in 1859, and declined to stand for Belfast in 1865), a Liberal and associate of Gladstone like a good Leither. He advocated imperial federation and was an active Fellow of the Royal Colonial Institute. In 1877 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He was prominent at one time or another in the Chambers of Commerce in Glasgow, Liverpool, Leith and Edinburgh. He was most passionately committed to the removal of restrictions imposed by patents and copyrights, and published widely in this cause. Here we encounter part of the concern that must have inspired his promotion of the *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*. He appealed to publishers and philanthropists to consider

What a folly and mistake it is to write books with a view to the moral, social, and religious welfare of men, and yet to rest satisfied with a system of law and trade that find the recompenses of authorship and of publishing ventures in a limited sale of dear books instead of an extensive sale of cheap ones.³⁹

³⁶ John Small, *The Castles and Mansions of the Lothians*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1833), vol. i (unpaginated); Malcolm Cant, *The Villages of Edinburgh*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh, 1987), 46-9 (including the Castle's demolition by the War Office in 1955). Cant throws light also on Macfie's good works in the district (41, 47, 49), including the Covenanters' monument in Redford Road. Different dates are given for Macfie's purchase of Dreghorn, but GUA, DC 120.5/24/15 in Macfie's own hand from early March 1862 gives a blow-by-blow account of his success in the bidding.

³⁷ At 11.30 p.m. (so the family register 1875-1907, GUA, DC 120.1/18,20), which explains why the date is sometimes given as 17 Feb.

³⁸ The British Library catalogue gives the fullest listing of his publications, but it is not complete, nor do they cover all his involvements.

³⁹ *Recent Discussions on the Abolition of Patents for Inventions...* (London, 1869), 295. In welcoming the first two volumes of ANCL, the *English Presbyterian Messenger*, 229 (1 Jan. 1867), 31 hailed them as "a marvel of

Among the indifferent verse which Macfie turned out in his later years is “A Dialogue between a Professor and a Cottager on Cheapening Books”. The latter tells the former

... for five shillings or less
A printer could send out your vols. from his press
In elegant style, an *édition de luxe*,
And that is not wanted for practical books;
Yet the price on the back is a guinea or more.⁴⁰

The ANCL allowed Macfie to combine his zeal for “cheapening” quality books with his support of overseas missions. “While in Glasgow he collected funds for prize essays on behalf of Christian missions, and was greatly encouraged and assisted in the affair by Dr Duff.”⁴¹ He was a director of the re-constituted Glasgow Missionary Society in 1838. A small correspondence with Alexander Duff is preserved in New College Library, Edinburgh. Macfie was one of the organisers of a conference on missions held at Liverpool in 1860, whose proceedings by his generosity enjoyed very wide circulation.⁴² Among participants he is listed as a member of the Foreign Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church in England. He served on this Committee from 1848 to 1866. Macfie also took part in later international missions conferences, at Mildmay Park, London, in 1878, and at Exeter Hall, London, in 1888. He was individually invited to the latter at least in part because of his role in initiating the Liverpool

cheapness”, amazed that such handsome books could be produced at such a low price.

⁴⁰ *Mottoes and Motives...* (London, 1885), 32.

⁴¹ *Biograph*, 63-4; *British Weekly*, 23 Feb. 1893, 290.

⁴² *Conference on Missions Held in 1860 at Liverpool...*, edited by the Secretaries to the Conference (London, 1860). One of these Secretaries was H. Carre Tucker, to whom with Macfie the *Biograph*, 64, credits the arrangement of the conference. For Macfie’s part in it, see *Conference* 7, 10, 74-5, 362. The Conference volume was offered free by the publishers, through Macfie’s generosity, to a wide range of institutions and organisations. GUA, DC 120.5/24/1 shows James Nisbet billing Macfie for £2657 for the printing of the Proceedings. The obituary in the *British Weekly*, 23 Feb. 1893, 290, credits him with both originating and wholly financing the conference itself.

conference, often regarded as the first such international gathering on missions.⁴³

In the mid-1840s the initiation of the Evangelical Alliance also engaged Macfie's energies. On noting his death in 1893 the Council of the Alliance recorded his membership of the Council "from the beginning".⁴⁴ He was present at the conference on Christian union held in Liverpool at the beginning of October 1845, and at the public meetings held in the city in mid-December on the proposed formation of the Alliance. Not, it seems, a Council member from the outset, he served from 1852 for many years. Was it some discussion within the counsels of the Evangelical Alliance that brought home to Robert Macfie the need for a complete translation of pre-Nicene Christian writings? Or had the *desideratum* been brought home to him by one of his associates such as his brother-in-law, John Henderson, of Park, Glasgow?⁴⁵ Or by the raising of the possibility in foreign mission circles in the Presbyterian Church in England? In 1860 among a gift of books by Macfie reported by the convenor of the Foreign Mission Committee was the offer to every Session of the Church of a copy of

⁴³ *Proceedings of the General Conference on Foreign Missions ... in Mildmay Park, London, in October, 1878*, edited by the Secretaries to the Conference (London, 1879), vii, 10, 245, 338-9 (Macfie was a representative of the Presbyterian Church in England); *Report of the Centenary Conference on the Protestant Missions of the World, held in Exeter Hall (June 9th-19th)*, London, 1888, ed. J. Johnston, 2 vols. (London, 1889), i, 3, 309-10, ii, 101-19, 135, 275-6, 326-7, 422-3, 587. On Liverpool 1860 as "originated and sustained" by Macfie, cf. i, 3 (and ii, 101-3), and on its significance, S.W. Carruthers, *The Contribution of English Presbyterianism to Foreign Missions* (Presbyterian Historical Society, 10th Annual Lecture; Manchester, 1933), 8-9.

⁴⁴ *Evangelical Christendom*, n.s., 34 (1893), 120; cf. 394.

⁴⁵ Cf. *Biograph*, 63. On Henderson (1780-1867), see Boase, i, 1424; *English Presbyterian Messenger*, n.s., 234 (1 June 1867), 189-90; *Glasgow Daily Herald*, 2 May 1867, 2. He was a very generous benefactor of religious and charitable causes. He married Robert Macfie's sister Mary (1816-94) in 1843. To the impression made on Henderson the same year by an exposition of Phil. 3:15,16 at the bicentenary celebration of the Westminster Assembly in Edinburgh "the [Evangelical] Alliance dates its origin": see *The Life and Letters of John Angell James*, ed. R.W. Dale (London, 1861), 409.

The Ancient Church by William D. Killen.⁴⁶ This account of the first three Christian centuries in reviewing the written sources twice remarks on the lack of a complete translation of the works of leading writers, Origen and Tertullian. Yet Killen entertains no high estimate of the Christianity of their era. Its “career of defection” had commenced in mid-second century.⁴⁷

Macfie’s own writings, with the exception of his first stab at *The Patent Question* (1863), came later than the ANCL, and particularly so his religious works, none of which clarifies his interest in the early Fathers. He enjoyed some reputation as, in the *Biograph*’s charitable expression, “indifferent to (or careless about following) the beaten track”.⁴⁸ The donor of a copy of his *Verities in Verses* (1888) to New College Library in 1934 spoke of Macfie as “a most excellent man, though many people thought him more than half cracked”.⁴⁹ The vision of the Ante-Nicene Christian Library in the 1860s may have required what today might be called a lateral thinker. It is to Macfie’s lasting credit that the vision became reality. For this alone he deserves to be better known. His editors have no such need to be recovered from oblivion.

Alexander Roberts (1826-1901) was born at Marykirk, Kincardineshire, and was educated first in Arbroath and Fettercairn, then at the Grammar School and King’s College Aberdeen and finally (1849-51) at New College, Edinburgh.⁵⁰ His attendance at the last is omitted from most biographical notices, which also obscure the fact that he was minister of Stonehaven Free Church 1852-57 until translated to the Carlton Hill Presbyterian Church in London which

⁴⁶ London, 1859. On Killen (1806-1902), who taught church history for decades in the Belfast Presbyterian college, see *DNB*, Killen, *Reminiscences of a Long Life* (London, 1901), especially p. 83 for his controversy-spurred engagements with the Fathers.

⁴⁷ Killen, *Ancient Church*, 365, 370, 651-3.

⁴⁸ *Biograph*, 64.

⁴⁹ J.H. Stevenson, on whom see *Who was Who, 1929-1940*.

⁵⁰ On Roberts see *DNB*; *Who Was Who, 1897-1916*; *Annals of the Free Church of Scotland*, ed. W. Ewing, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1914), i, 300.

later became the St John's Wood congregation (1857-71).⁵¹ In 1872 he was appointed to the chair of Humanity at St Andrews, retiring in 1899. He was a member of the panel that produced the New Testament of the Revised Version (1870-84) and wrote a *Companion* to it (1881; 1885). He became best known for arguing with more ability than success that Jesus habitually spoke Greek. He was awarded Edinburgh's D.D. in 1864, well in advance of most of his scholarly attainments. From the course of his career, it is clear that the whole of his involvement in the ANCL, for which he contributed to the translations of Justin (fragments only), Irenaeus and the Apostolic Fathers (unspecified), fell within his English sojourn. This may explain how some of the translators were enlisted for the project.

James Donaldson (1831-1915) spent almost all his life in Scotland.⁵² Also a son of the north-east, born in Aberdeen, he was schooled likewise in the city's Grammar School and then Marischal College. He proceeded to New College, London, but then departed from his intention to become a Congregationalist minister and travelled instead to study in Berlin. There in addition to classics and theology he concentrated on educational theory and practice, in which he would make his best-known contribution back in Scotland. After two years as assistant to Edinburgh University's professor of Greek, John Stuart Blackie, he was briefly rector of Stirling High School before becoming a classics teacher at Edinburgh's Royal High School in 1856 and then, after ten years, rector of the School until 1881. The last period of his career was spent in the university world, first for five years as professor of Humanity at Aberdeen, followed by the principalship of the United College of St Salvator and St Leonard in St Andrews (1886-

⁵¹ The *DNB* conceals altogether his belonging to the Free Church of Scotland. Pfaff, "Anglo-American...", 40, simply makes him a Presbyterian minister, but wrongly in Edinburgh.

⁵² On Donaldson see *DNB*; *Who Was Who, 1897-1916*; *Schola Regia* (the magazine of the Royal High School), 1895, 49-50; A. John Murray, *A History of the Royal High School* (Edinburgh, 1997), 58-61; Earl of Rosebery and R. Latta, in *Aberdeen University Review*, 2 (1915), 193-200; *The Fusion of 1860. A Record of the Centenary Celebrations and a History of the United University of Aberdeen 1860-1960*, ed. W.D. Simpson (Edinburgh, 1963) – reprinted, abridged, from *Alma Mater* of 1884, via *Aberdeen Univ. Rev.*, 38 (1960).

) and finally of the reconstituted University in 1889. He remained principal and vice-chancellor until his death. Active almost to the very end, he expressed his support for the First World War and his regret that he was too old to enlist.

In addition to his work in the field of educational policy, Donaldson wrote on sacrifices among the Greeks (1875), the Westminster Confession and the Thirty-Nine Articles (1905) and a book entitled *Woman: Her Position and Influence in Ancient Greece and Rome, and Among the Early Christians* (1906). (His efforts on this study obviously unsettled his mind, since among his papers in St Andrews are notes on the position and influence of women among the ante-Nicene Christians.)⁵³ But his early church writings mostly issued from his quarter-century at the Royal High School in Edinburgh. In 1864-6 he published a three-volume *Critical History of Christian Literature and Doctrine from the Death of the Apostles to the Nicene Council*, which not only was at the time beyond compare in English but even earned Harnack's later accolade – “not surpassed by any German publication”.⁵⁴ Harnack would ensure that in time it was, by his own *Geschichte* covering the same territory also in three volumes (1893-1904). It is largely with preparatory collection of material for the *Critical History* that the relevant portions of Donaldson's papers are concerned. In one of the boxes a loose fascicule headed New Testament reviews autobiographically the course of his questions about the Testament. During these deliberations with himself, he reports, he examined all the Christian writers down to Nicaea. A marginal note says that he will ‘some day’ lay the results of his investigation before the public. Here he merely states that his view of what was in the New Testament had not altered, but that he had a “much clearer apprehension of the whole mode of conception” of the early Christians.⁵⁵ The Ante-Nicene Christian Library formed as it were a complement to Donaldson's *Critical History*.

⁵³ St Andrews University Library, Donaldson Papers, box 7 (b) ii.

⁵⁴ *Scotsman*, 10 March 1915, 9.

⁵⁵ St Andrews University Library, Donaldson Papers, box 16/15. Much more material relates to his history of early Christian literature than to the ANCL. His pocket diaries for 1865, 1867, 1869, 1871 and 1872 contain very little.

As a translator, Donaldson contributed part of volume 1, part again of the Ps-Clementine *Homilies* and all of the *Apostolic Constitutions* in volume 17, and the Liturgy of the Holy Apostles in volume 24. The last is normally known as the Liturgy of Addai and Mari, being the ancient Syriac liturgy of Edessan origin possibly in the third century. Donaldson translated it from a Latin version.

The Additional Volume that was published by T&T Clark in 1897 stands apart from the main series, not only by the lapse of time since volume 24 (1872) and by its larger format. It was edited not by Roberts and Donaldson but by Allan Menzies, professor of Biblical Criticism in St Mary's College, St Andrews. Furthermore it was from the start a co-operative project with the American publishers of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, in which series it appeared as volume 10 already in 1896.⁵⁶ The Preface is the same in both series, and uses the American title "Ante-Nicene Fathers" throughout. Nevertheless at base it was more a Scottish production than the set it supplemented, with all but one of the eight translators Scottish. The discussion that follows will concentrate first on volumes 1-24.

The corps of translators that Roberts and Donaldson assembled, twentythree in number in addition to themselves, was a mixed lot.⁵⁷ Very few remain otherwise wholly or almost wholly untraced, such as Alexander Walker Esq., one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools for Scotland, who translated the Apocryphal New Testament (vol. 16).⁵⁸ For volume 24 William Macdonald, M.A., Englished the Liturgy of St

⁵⁶ Cf. Pfaff, "Anglo-American...", 46, "The tenth volume, which was also issued as a supplementary volume xxv in the ANCL format...."

⁵⁷ Included here is the unfortunate William Hewitson Cairns, who translated books 7 and 8 of Origen's *Contra Celsum* in volume 23, for which Frederick Crombie gets all the credit on the title-page and hence ever after in every catalogue and dictionary. Cairns, who translated almost a quarter of the work, graduated from Edinburgh (B.A., 1854; M.A., 1856) and at the time of publication (1872) was rector of Dumfries Academy. Crombie was minister of nearby Penpont 1863-8. I have been unable to discover more about Cairns. Another unrecorded contributor to ANCL was the Irish Congregationalist minister, Isaac Jennings (1813-73), who produced the indexes of many volumes (so from T&T Clark's letter-books in the National Library of Scotland): see *The Congregational Year Book, 1874* (London, 1874), 339-40.

⁵⁸ Walker was Inspector 1870-96 and Chief Inspector 1896-1902: T.R. Bone, *School Inspection in Scotland 1840-1966* (London, 1968), 158, 260.

James from Greek, but has otherwise not left his mark anywhere obvious.⁵⁹ For the same volume George Ross Merry (1841-1930), who sprang from Kilmarnock, studied at Glasgow University, graduated at Oxford (Lincoln College, B.A., 1870; M.A., 1882) and became a school-teacher, translated the Liturgy of St Mark, probably while Classics master at Edinburgh Academy (1870-83). He then was rector of the High School of Dundee (1883-1903), and was awarded Glasgow's LL.D. in 1887.⁶⁰ The Revd Benjamin Plummer Pratten (1817-89) was responsible for translations from Greek and Syriac in five different volumes of the set, but is not well attested biographically, despite coming from a well-known Bristol family. He studied at Bristol Baptist College and served as pastor at Boxmoor, Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire during 1844-58. He did not subsequently pursue an active pastorate, settling in Gualsborough, Northants. For T&T Clark he had already translated E.W. Hengstenberg's *Dissertations on David and Zechariah* (1847) before his involvement in the ANCL. He died at Haslemere in Surrey.⁶¹

Other labourers are so well known in other fields that little needs to be said about them, but it will be worthwhile identifying some whose distinction had little or nothing to do with translating the early Fathers. Marcus Dods, for example, professor of New Testament Criticism and Principal of New College (d. 1909), translated much of Justin and Ps-Justin in volume 2 and Theophilus of Antioch in volume 3, as well as editing T&T Clark's Augustine series. Thomas Smith (1817-1906), translator of the Ps-Clementine *Recognitions* (vol. 3) and part of the *Homilies* (vol. 17), is introduced in the *DNB* as "missionary and

⁵⁹ Possibly the M.A. of Aberdeen in 1861 who was headmaster of Berwick Grammar School 1876-81.

⁶⁰ *The Dundee High School Magazine: Centenary Number 1834-1934*, 33; Jessie A. Norrie, *Memories of the Old High School (1880-1889)* (Dundee, 1924), ix, 147-8; information kindly supplied by Mrs F.M. Piddock, Librarian of Lincoln College, Oxford, and Mr A. Michael Duncan, Rector of the High School of Dundee. Merry died 24 April 1930; *Glasgow Herald*, 25 April 1930, 13.

⁶¹ *Baptist Hand-Book for 1890* (London, 1890), 129; *Baptist Magazine*, Oct. 1889, 472; *A Baptist Bibliography*, ed. Edward C. Starr, vol. 19 (Rochester, NY, 1973), 4. I am grateful for information supplied by Dr Ruth Gouldbourne of Bristol Baptist College.

mathematician". A student of Thomas Chalmers in Edinburgh, described in one obituary as "The Last of the pre-Disruption Ministers", he published in such diverse areas that the printed British Library catalogue has his works distributed between three different namesakes. (Smith generously believed that Chalmers' deficiencies in scholarship were exaggerated, but accepted that, when he quoted Latin, more often than not he "fell into a prosodial error", due more to Chalmers' want of a musical ear than his lack of a classical culture.)⁶² Smith received three honorary degrees from Edinburgh University, M.A. (1858), D.D. (1867), LL.D. (1900). He spent twenty active years as protégé and colleague of Alexander Duff in Calcutta, another two decades leading a home mission charge he founded in the Cowgate in Edinburgh, and his last active thirteen years as Duff's successor in the chair of evangelistic theology in New College. In 1902 at the age of 85 he published a book on Euclid.

Less well known is Peter Peterson (1847-99), who also translated part of the Clementine *Homilies* (vol. 17). An Edinburgh classics graduate (1867), he pursued with high distinction the study of Sanskrit he began in Edinburgh under Professor Aubrecht, first in Oxford (Lincoln and Balliol) and then for almost twentyfive years as professor at Elphinstone College, Bombay. His unparalleled achievement was the discovery and publication of Sanskrit manuscripts. He was also credited with "a most beautiful English style".⁶³

It was in Canada that William Robinson Clark (1829-1912), translator of Methodius in volume 14, attained eminence. Another alumnus of the Grammar School and King's College, Aberdeen, Clark had spent more than twenty years as an Anglican cleric, mostly in

⁶² Anon., *Scottish Review*, 2 (1906), 598. See also *DNB*; *Who Was Who, 1897-1916*; Ewing, *Annals* i, 321-2; *Scotsman*, 28 May 1906, 9; George Smith, "The Last of the Pre-Disruption Ministers", *Scottish Review*, 2 (1906), 597; anon., *ibid.*, 598; British Library Catalogue, s.n.n. Smith (Thomas) D.D., *Free-Church Minister...*, Smith (Thomas) D.D., LL.D., and Smith (Thomas) *Missionary...* Smith is a regrettable absentee from the *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, edd. N.M. de S. Cameron *et al.* (Edinburgh 1993).

⁶³ See *DNB*; *The Athenaeum*, 3750 (9 Sept. 1899), 356; *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for 1899, 917-19 (E.J. Rapson); Boase, vi, 390. The quotation is from Rapson, 919.

Taunton, until 1880. After a pause he moved to the USA and then in 1883 began almost three decades teaching philosophy and other subjects in Toronto in Trinity College and the University. His widely varied services to scholarship included translations of Hagenbach's *History of Christian Doctrine* and Hefele's *History of the Councils of the Church*. He died full of honours, a year after editing Kingsley's *Water Babies*.⁶⁴

Clark is the first translator to be mentioned here who was a clergyman of the Church of England, but he was not the only one. Six others, and two Church of Ireland priests, ought to have given the *Bookseller*'s anonymous reviewer pause in sussing out an anti-episcopal Tendenz. They included William Hautenville Rambaut from Dublin, co-translator with editor Roberts of Irenaeus, but career-wise never out of Ireland.⁶⁵ Among some of the other Anglican clerical translators a West Country connexion is identifiable. James Benjamin Head Hawkins (1832/3-c.1899) responsible for three Egyptian writers in volume 14, was an Oxford graduate who spent most of his professional life in parishes in Somerset and Bristol.⁶⁶ A more varied and wideranging course was pursued by William Fletcher (1810-1900), who translated the works of Lactantius in volumes 21 and 22. Another Oxonian, briefly a Fellow of Brasenose (1833-5), he was headmaster of Queen Elizabeth's School, Wimborne, in Dorset, from 1848 to 1872, and so during the years in which his translation was executed and published. His obituary in *The Guardian* portrayed him as belonging to the old-fashioned "Moderate Church" school of thought, without partisanship, in fullest sympathy with those sought to observe the *Book of Common Prayer* in its entirety, without deviation in either direction.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ See *Who Was Who, 1897-1916; Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, 3rd ser., vii (1914), pp. x-xii; *Crockford's Clerical Directory*, 1895, 254-5; W.S. Wallace, *The Macmillan Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, 4th edn. ed. W.A. McKay (Toronto, 1926), 158-9.

⁶⁵ Born 1821/2, a native of Dublin, he graduated B.A. of Trinity College, Dublin. See *Crockford's*, 1895, 1097.

⁶⁶ *Crockford's*, 1895, 606.

⁶⁷ *Crockford's*, 1895, 466; Boase, v, 313; Rupert Simms, *Bibliotheca Staffordiensis* (Lichfield, 1894), 171; *The Guardian* 2850, 18 July 1900, 1037-8.

Unusual in having gained a Ph.D. from the University of Rostock in northern Germany (1865), Robert Ernest Wallis (1820-1900) was another translator – of Cyprian, Victorinus of Pettau and Commodian – whose clerical career passed entirely in Devon and Somerset, mostly (1863-1900) as vicar of Coxley near Wells.⁶⁸ He also contributed to Marcus Dods' edition of Augustine in English, and translated some German writings for T&T Clark. Devonshire was the scene likewise of all the ministerial labours of Sydney Thelwall (1834-1922), a scholar of Christ's College, Cambridge, who at the time when he must have been translating Tertullian for volumes 11 and 18 served in Devonport and Plymouth as a curate.⁶⁹ During these years he also taught at Plymouth Grammar School, which associates him immediately with the other chief translator of Tertullian, Peter Holmes (1815-78).⁷⁰ Most of Holmes' life from birth to death was spent in or near Plymouth, including 1840-54 as head of Plymouth Grammar School and then of a private school in the city. His role as domestic chaplain to the Countess of Rothes seems not to have taken him away from the area of Plymouth, where too he got to know Bishop W.I. Trower (1804-77), formerly bishop of Glasgow and Galloway and later of Gibraltar, to whom he dedicated one of his volumes of Tertullian (vol. 15). Holmes' publications display an undeniable catholicity. In addition to Tertullian and his part in the English version of Augustine's anti-Pelagian corpus put out by T&T Clark, he translated two works by the High Church Bishop George Bull (1634-1710) for Pusey's Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology. Finally in 1875 he published *A Memorial Notice of*

⁶⁸ *Crockford's*, 1900, 1413; Boase vi, 770; Brit. Lib. Catalogue.

⁶⁹ John Peile, *Biographical Register of Christ's College 1505-1905*, ii: 1666-1905 (Cambridge, 1913), 559; *List of Past and Present Members of Christ's College, Cambridge, with Annual Report to 31 December 1923*, 88; J.A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, ii: 6 (Cambridge, 1954), 148. I am grateful to Michelle Courtney of Christ's College for information supplied.

⁷⁰ On Holmes see Boase, i, 1515-16; *Crockford's* 1865, 316; *The Academy*, 14 (July-Dec. 1878), 428. He was F.R.A.S., which to Pfaff makes him a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Scotland ("Anglo-American...", 41), and to *Crockford's* of the Royal Society of Antiquaries. He was in fact a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, from 1841. (It must be sheer coincidence that William Rambaut translated Irenaeus while Assistant Astronomer at Armagh.) This Countess of Rothes was Henrietta Anderson Morshead (1832-86): *Scots Peerage*, vii, 309.

Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, the autodidact New Testament textual critic who, having been brought up as a Quaker, became a member of the Plymouth Brethren and latterly a Presbyterian.

John Henry McMahon (1829-1900), who put the *Refutation of All Heresies* by Hippolytus of Rome into English for volume 6, had earlier translated Aristotle and was a stout defender of religious establishment. Most of his life from beginning to end was passed in Dublin, where he held both parochial charges and chaplaincies as a priest of the Church of Ireland.⁷¹ Finally among the Anglican translators we note Robert Sinker (1838-1913), responsible for the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs in volume 22. Trinity College, Cambridge, possessed him for the whole of his adult years, as student, chaplain (1865-71) and librarian (1871-1907). Sinker's writings were in diverse fields, including missionary biography. He edited *Across Siberia with a Baby* by Arthur Polhill, one of the Cambridge Seven, and compiled *Memorials of the Hon. Ian Keith-Falconer*, missionary pioneer in Arabia. The latter was a Trinity man. For the ANCL Sinker's edition of the Testaments in 1869 made him an obvious choice as translator.

The remaining participants in the enterprise were all Scots. The main translator of Origen for the series (vols 10 and 23) was Frederick Crombie (1826/7-89), professor of Biblical Criticism at St Andrews from 1868 until his death. (He was succeeded by Allan Menzies, who would edit the Additional Volume.) He had previously been minister of the Scots Kirk, Paris, and of Penpont, Dumfriesshire. The *Fasti* makes no mention of his work on Origen.⁷² The last three translators belonged to Free and United Free Presbyterianism. S.D.F. Salmond (1837-1905), another alumnus of Aberdeen's Grammar School, University and Free Church College, returned to the College in 1876 as professor and later principal, after ministering to the Free Church in Barry, Forfarshire from 1865.⁷³ Salmond is probably best known as the author of *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality* (1895), but deserves a name also as co-editor, with Charles A. Briggs of Union Theological

⁷¹ See *DNB*; Boase, vi, 133; *Times*, 24 May 1900, 11.

⁷² See Boase, iv, 807; *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae*, ed. H. Scott *et al.*, (Edinburgh, 1866-), vii, 430; *The Guardian*, 26 June 1889, 986.

⁷³ On Salmond see *Who Was Who*, 1897-1916; J.A. Lamb, *Fasti of the United Free Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1956), 582; *Dictionary*, ed. Cameron, 743.

Seminary, New York, of T&T Clark's International Theological Library (not to be confused with Clark's Foreign Theological Library mentioned earlier), which began appearing in 1891 with S.R. Driver's *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*. Salmond furnished material for four volumes of the ANCL (6, 9, 14, 20), from Hippolytus, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Dionysius of Alexandria and others. Alongside several New Testament works, he also translated some Augustine for Clark's series and John of Damascus on *The Orthodox Faith* for the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.

Like some other translators, George Reith (1842-1919) was a pupil at Aberdeen Grammar School and University, like Salmond he spent time in Erlangen University. New College (1861-5) prepared him for a long ministry in the Free and United Free congregation of College, Glasgow (1866-1910). He was UF Moderator in 1914-15. He translated Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho* for volume 2, having surely been recruited by Alexander Roberts, a family friend with whom he holidayed in Greece during Roberts' years at St John's Wood, London.⁷⁴ Alone among the company of translators in spending all his active career in the Free Church was William Wilson (1828-75), another Aberdonian who from King's College and the Free Church College came south to New College (1852-3) and served congregations at Monkton, Ayrshire (many years before John Patrick, translator of Origen in the Additional Volume, was parish minister there), and Musselburgh.⁷⁵ In addition to translating all the writings of Clement of Alexandria (for volumes 4, 12 and 22), he also wrote *The Popular Preachers of the Ancient Church* (1859), with translations from Chrysostom, Gregory of Nazianzus and other Fathers. *The Heroines of the Household* (1869) begins with a portrait of Monnica, the mother of Augustine, as piously improving as the title suggests.

The collaborators on the Additional Volume, eight in all, were only a little less varied. The editor was Allan Menzies (1845-1916), professor of Divinity and Biblical Criticism at St Andrews from

⁷⁴ Lamb, *Fasti*, 216; W.M. Clow, *Dr George Reith: A Scottish Ministry* (London, 1928), 82-3.

⁷⁵ Ewing, *Annals*, i, 359-60; memoir by James Moir in Wilson, "Until the Day Break" and Other Sermons (Edinburgh, 1876). He is missing from Hugh Watt's typescript list of New College students in the College Library.

1889.⁷⁶ He also contributed Origen's Commentary on John to the supplement, as well as sundry other books, essays and articles on subjects ranging from *The Religions of India* (1902) to 2 Corinthians and John Calvin. Prior to St Andrews he was minister of Abernyte, Perthshire, 1873-89. The chief translator of Origen for the main ANCL series, Frederick Crombie, was Menzies's predecessor at St Andrews. For the Additional Volume John Patrick (1850-1933) translated the remains of Origen's Matthew commentary, having already to his credit a book on Origen's reply to Celsus, the first pagan critic known to have compiled a whole treatise against Christianity. Later Patrick published his Croall lectures on Clement of Alexandria. Having served as parish minister in Ayrshire and Edinburgh (Greenside), he was presented by Queen Victoria to the chair of Biblical Criticism and Biblical Antiquities at Edinburgh (1898-1915), serving also as Dean of Divinity 1899-1912. William Curtis's chapter in Logan Turner's *History of the University of Edinburgh 1883-1933* names Patrick among a handful of Divinity professors in this half-century who "maintained responsible touch with the Church's organised activities".⁷⁷

The *Apology* of Aristides was translated from Syriac and Greek for the Additional Volume by David Miller Kay (1866-1930), presumably while assistant (1895-7) to A.R.S. Kennedy in the Hebrew chair in Edinburgh, and before going off to head the Kirk's mission in Constantinople (1898-1902), whence he returned to take up the regius professorship of Hebrew and Oriental Languages at St Andrews (1902-30).⁷⁸ Kay's Croall lectures on *The Semitic Religions, Hebrew, Jewish, Christian, Moslem* were published in 1923. Also for the extra volume John Keith (1850-1902) prepared full translations of the two *Epistles* attributed to Clement of Rome, from the recently discovered Constantinople manuscript that gave the world the *Didache*. Keith was a product of Edinburgh's Royal High School during Donaldson's time and then assisted John Stuart Blackie, professor of Greek in the

⁷⁶ *Who Was Who, 1916-1928; Fasti*, ed. Scott, vii, 430-31; memoir by daughter in his *A Study of Calvin and Other Papers* (London, 1918).

⁷⁷ Cited by Hugh Watt, *New College Edinburgh. A Centenary History* (Edinburgh, 1946), 151, cf. 226; see also *Who Was Who, 1929-1940; Fasti*, ed. Scott, vii, 389, viii, 716.

⁷⁸ *Who Was Who, 1929-1940; Fasti*, ed. Scott, vii. 427.

University (1871-7), before fulfilling parochial charges at Skelmorlie and Largs.⁷⁹

Menzies also recruited as translators two who would become more illustrious for their scholarship than any other participants in the whole project. One of them graduated at St Andrews in 1888 in classics and philosophy while Donaldson was professor of Humanity. William Alexander Craigie (1867-1957), knighted in 1928, translated three minor texts for the 1897 Volume. He went on to win international renown as “the master lexicographer of our time”, in the judgement of A.J. Aitken, with whom Craigie worked on the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*, among his many other literary memorials.⁸⁰ The other was the most eminent patristic scholar among the translators, Joseph Armitage Robinson (1858-1933).⁸¹ He produced English versions of the Gospel of Peter and the Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs for the Additional Volume. Robinson is perhaps best known as the author of a fine commentary on Ephesians (1903), but his patristic studies were weighty, including the founding of the Texts and Studies series during his years at Cambridge (1891). He moved from the Norrisian chair of divinity at Cambridge (1893-9) to Westminster, first as rector of St Margaret’s and then as Dean (1902-11). Later he produced a translation from the Armenian of the recently discovered *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching* by Irenaeus (1920), which was too late to make it into the ANCL. The *Didache*, first published in 1883, for which Robinson argued a late date but one still well within the scope of ANCL, failed to get even a mention in the Additional Volume. For all the controversy the newly-discovered text aroused, its total absence must be judged the most surprising lacuna.

Hope Hogg (1863-1912), another Edinburgh graduate, translated the *Diatessaron* for the Additional Volume from Arabic with the help of his wife. He was born in Cairo, his father being principal of the American College in Assiout, where the son also served during 1888-94. He then worked at Oxford on the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (1894-

⁷⁹ *Fasti*, ed. Scott, iii, 216.

⁸⁰ A.J. Aitken, review in *Scottish Historical Review*, 32 (1953), 170-72, at 170, of [J.M. Wyllie], *A Memoir and A List of the Published Writings of Sir William A. Craigie* (Oxford, 1952); Wyllie in *Proceedings of British Academy*, 47 (1961), 273-91; *DNB*.

⁸¹ *DNB*; T.F. Taylor, *J. Armitage Robinson* (Cambridge, 1991).

1903) before teaching Semitic Languages at Manchester for his last ten years.⁸² Finally, Andrew Rutherford, a Glasgow graduate (MA, 1879; BD, 1882), had a brief span as a minister of the Kirk in Dundee but later became a merchant in Glasgow.⁸³ He contributed the English of six items. He had earlier (1892) translated Ernst Moeller's early church history for T&T Clark.

Leaving aside these eight contributors to the Additional Volume and concentrating on the other twentyfive, we can trace various connexions and factors that help to explain the participation of most of them in the project, although a few puzzles remain. Exceptional is the case of Robert Sinker, author of a critical edition of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (1869) presumably published before his commission for its translation issued two years later. George Ross Merry was a contemporary at Lincoln College, Oxford, of Peter Peterson, whose Edinburgh roots sufficiently account for his own inclusion, but Merry was surely brought in by Donaldson while both were teaching in Edinburgh. A handful of translators of the early Fathers had previously translated for T&T Clark from modern languages, mostly German. They included Benjamin Pratten, whose translation of Hengstenberg (1848) bears a preface written from Boxmoor, near Hemel Hempstead. By the time his first ANCL contribution appeared, in 1867, he is placed in Bristol, which might connect him with the half-dozen West Country translators, although, unlike them, Pratten was not an Anglican. We might surmise that one or other of this group recruited the rest. Two among them, William Fletcher and Robert Wallis, had previously produced translations put out by T&T Clark, in 1858 and 1864 respectively.

One of these West of England parsons, William Robinson Clark, studied at the Grammar School and King's College, Aberdeen, graduating M.A. in 1848 the year after editor Roberts. Some of their translating colleagues educated at Aberdeen passed through one of the two Colleges, or the united University, several years later – thus Salmond graduated from Marischal College in 1857 and George Reith from the newly united University in 1861. The Alexander Walker who translated the Apocryphal New Testament (vol. 16), writing from St Andrews, is possibly to be identified with the Alexander George

⁸² *Who was Who, 1897-1916.*

⁸³ *Fasti*, ed. Scott, v, 324.

Walker who studied in King's College 1859-62. Aberdeen's place as a nursery of patristic translation in nineteenth-century Scotland cannot be gainsaid. William Wilson, translator of Clement of Alexandria, graduated M.A. of King's College in 1849 and proceeded to three sessions in the Free Church college, 1849-52. Not least important, James Donaldson studied at Marischal College during 1846-50. In 1849 he served as one of the editors of the *Aberdeen University Magazine*. For one year, 1846-47, Roberts and Donaldson were both students in Aberdeen, in different Colleges which nevertheless were moving towards union in 1860. In fact, this is the only time before the production of the ANCL when the paths of its two editors are known to have crossed. It strains belief to suppose that even then seeds of the future enterprise were sown, but not that the two former pupils of Aberdeen's Grammar School, both of whom would move on from university to ministerial training in independent church colleges, forged bonds of respect and friendship which laid a basis for future editorial collaboration.

Donaldson went from Aberdeen to prepare for the Congregationalist ministry at New College, London, where he studied probably during 1850-52. Roberts was a Presbyterian minister in London 1857-71. No evidence has emerged to link the editors' London sojourns with any other fellow-worker in the project, despite the fact, already noted, that Roberts' whole involvement presumably fell within his London years.

Even the group of Irish translators can now be linked with the Aberdeen university and college world c.1850 by the chance discovery that one of them, Archibald Hamilton Bryce, came from "the Belfast College" to be assistant to the professor of Greek in King's College, Aberdeen during 1848-52.⁸⁴ Owing to the professor's illness, he was

⁸⁴ *Officers and Graduates of University and King's College Aberdeen MVD-MDCCCLX*, ed. P.J. Anderson (New Spalding Club 11; Aberdeen. 1893), 64, 323; see also British Library Catalogue. From information kindly supplied by Ms Jane Maxwell of the Old Library, Trinity College, Bryce was born in Co. Derry, the son of James Bryce, "a dissenting clergyman". The Royal Society of Edinburgh, of which he became a Fellow on 21 January 1867, recorded his date of birth as 29 February 1824. In *The Irish Question* (2nd edn., Edinburgh, 1889), he talks of having resided "many years in different parts of Ireland".

more prominent in teaching as his substitute than an assistant might expect to be. Even if, as a student in Marischal and not King's, Donaldson did not encounter him in Aberdeen, they both taught Classics together in the Royal High School, Edinburgh. Bryce served there 1852-67 before founding his own school in the city, the little-known Edinburgh Collegiate School, on the south side of Charlotte Square. Intended to overcome the deficiencies of the Royal High's provision, it flourished and died with its founder and head, from 1867 to c.1895.⁸⁵

Although not based in Dublin after his undergraduate years, so it seems, Bryce probably recruited two fellow-Irishmen for the translation project. Bryce, McMahon and Rambaut all graduated B.A. of Trinity College, Dublin, in 1852, 1852 and 1848 respectively. McMahon's translation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* was published in London in 1857 and his *Treatise on Metaphysics* in 1860. He acknowledged the help of Dr Carl Friedrich Lottner, professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology (1863-71) and sub-librarian of Trinity College, in unravelling Hippolytus's catalogue of heresies.

Bryce co-translated Arnobius for volume 19 (1871) with Hugh Campbell, M.A., with no division of labour indicated between them. Campbell (1847-99), a native of Dundee and graduate of St Andrews (M.A., 1866; LL.D., 1888), trained at New College, London, and served as a Congregational pastor in Dumfries (1873-77) and Wigan (1877-82) before turning to school-teaching, at Stranraer Academy and then as first rector of Falkirk High School (1886-99). Between St Andrews and New College, London, he studied in Edinburgh, where he was associated with Bryce in founding the Collegiate School, and in Bonn and Paris, and must have worked with Bryce on Arnobius.⁸⁶

On his father James Bryce see Robert Small, *History of the Congregations of the United Presbyterian Church 1733-1900* (Edinburgh, 1904), ii, 476-8.

⁸⁵ See John Anderson, "The Edinburgh Collegiate School", *Illustrations*, Sept. 1889, 370-72; Alexander Law, "Edinburgh Schools of the Nineteenth Century" (typescript, ed. Ann Hope and Rosemary Wake, 1995 – in Edinburgh Central Library), 64-6. Bryce was LL.D. of Dublin (1863), FRSE (1867) and DCL.

⁸⁶ See R.J. McIntosh, "A Great Provincial School. The Jubilee of Falkirk 'High'", *Scots Magazine*, n.s. 26:2 (Nov. 1936), 106-12 at 108-10; *Falkirk High School Centenary Magazine 1886-1986*, 14-15, 21; *Scotsman*, 10 July

Together, Bryce and his three associates contributed substantially to the ANCL. Bryce and Campbell did their best with Arnobius, hitherto untranslated and extant in only one manuscript, who knew vastly more about Graeco-Roman religion and philosophy than Christianity. McMahon translated Hippolytus's principal work, *Refutation of All Heresies*, most of which was first published in Greek only in 1851, and Rambaut was entrusted with much of no less an author than Irenaeus. How well Rambaut did, however, may be open to doubt. A note in volume 5 records that Roberts translated books 1-2 of Irenaeus's *Against Heresies*, while the "groundwork" of the rest of the volume had been furnished by Rambaut. In volume 9, no such note distinguishes the contributions of the two translators.

On two of the Scottish translators, William Macdonald, M.A., and Alexander Walker, nothing much can be said until their identities take on clearer shape. The Free Church of Scotland was home to five translators as well as editor Roberts: Marcus Dods, student at Edinburgh's University and New College (1854-58), whose translation work was done while he was minister of Renfield Free Church, Glasgow; George Reith, a few years after Dods at New College (1861-65), who translated Justin's *Dialogue* (Dods did nearly all the other Justiniana) probably also while a fresh minister in Glasgow; Stewart Salmond, a product wholly of Aberdeen whose translating labours fell within his ministry to the Free Church at Barry near the coast between Carnoustie and Monifieth; polymathic Thomas Smith, who translated the pseudo-Clementines while a missioner in the Cowgate, Edinburgh; and pious William Wilson, graduate of King's College, Aberdeen, and student at both the Aberdeen and Edinburgh Free Church colleges (he spent 1852-53 at New College prior to licensing in 1853), whose Englishing of Clement of Alexandria was "only a diversion" from serving Musselburgh Free Church.⁸⁷

Remarkably enough, only one participant in the original Ante-Nicene Library was a minister of the established Church of Scotland –

1899, 7; *Scottish Congregationalist*, 12 (1899), 251-2 (obituary by Alex. Pollock); W.D. McNaughton, *The Scottish Congregational Ministry 1794-1993* (Glasgow, 1993), 22. I am grateful for the help of Ms Carol Sergeant, Librarian of Falkirk High School. In his edition of Horace in 1897 Bryce still acknowledged Campbell's assistance.

⁸⁷ James Moir, Memoir in Wilson, "Until the Day Break", xxiii.

Frederick Crombie, whose translating must have spanned his last years in the Dumfriesshire parish of Penpont and his first professorial years in St Andrews. (By contrast, of the eight contributors to the Additional Volume of 1897, five were Church of Scotland ministers and the only other cleric was the Anglican Armitage Robinson. That editor Menzies was a Kirk minister largely explains the change.) Three were laymen of unknown affiliation, W.H. Cairns (quite possibly national Church),⁸⁸ Macdonald and Walker. One who had the smallest walk-on part, as versifier of the hymns of Clement of Alexandria, was a long-serving Edinburgh Congregationalist minister, William Lindsay Alexander (1808-84), surely well known to the erstwhile Congregationalist ordinand now teaching in the Royal High School, and perhaps in touch with the series' other editor as a member of the Old Testament Revision panel.

There is not a little truth in Richard Pfaff's assessment of the company of translators as "a very mixed bag: Scots and Englishmen, Presbyterians, Anglicans, and Free Churchmen, established scholars and obscure country parsons".⁸⁹ He could have gone further to mention the Irishmen and the laymen in other professions (Donaldson, Cairns, Macdonald and Merry were all school rectors, as too were the ministers Bryce and Campbell, and perhaps Walker too, since he became a schools Inspector), and also have avoided the confusing usage of "Free Churchmen" in a Scottish setting. They were, to be sure, far from being all "Victorian gentlemen from Edinburgh". Of the twentyfive translators (including Cairns and the editors) half spent none of their identifiable lives in Edinburgh. Confessionally, the largest group consisted of Anglicans, both English and Irish – nine clergymen. Seven were Presbyterian ministers, one Congregationalist. Uncertainty at best obscures the religious affiliation of the rest, including one minister.

This applies to James Donaldson himself. We have noted his unfulfilled intention to enter the Congregationalist ministry, which took him to New College London probably in 1850, the newly united College's first year. Thereafter his ecclesiastical allegiance seems never to be mentioned. His book on different aspects of subscription to *The Westminster Confession of Faith and the Thirty-Nine Articles of*

⁸⁸ On Cairns see n. 57 above.

⁸⁹ Pfaff, "Anglo-American...", 41.

the Church of England (1905) must be read as deliberately avoiding the nailing of his colours to a denominational mast. Pfaff's judgement that Donaldson and Roberts did not impose "any strict Presbyterian orthodoxy" on their translators implies a false assumption about Donaldson.⁹⁰ What he published in 1905 in turn cannot be assumed to speak for his earlier editorial years, but it deplored the House of Lords' decision in the Free Church case, reckoned it unreasonable that "cultivated men" could subscribe to the Scottish Church's Confession and the English Articles and judged that both the new United Free Church and the continuing Free Church had deviated from the Confession. This last point he demonstrated from the writings of four of the five teachers appointed to the Free Church's new College, none of whom belonged to the Church itself.⁹¹

Another way of characterising the complexion of the company of translators would be to describe it as more catholic than the professedly Catholic fellowship of Pusey's collaborators, all of whom were to be "Members of the Anglican Church" and their work a collective apologia for Tractarian devotion to "ancient Catholic truth, free from the errors, alike of modern Rome and of Ultra-Protestantism". When the contents of the *Ante-Nicene Christian Library* were rearranged for the American edition known as the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, they were subjected to tendentious editorial comments by the series editor Arthur Cleveland Coxe, the bishop of Western New York. "The entire ante-Nicene literature of Christianity becomes a series of proof-texts for Coxe's views." As a result, "The sober and relatively impartial 'editorial personality' of the ANCL, happily free from the *odium theologicum*, is completely submerged under his editorship".⁹² Coxe's prejudices were not those of a Puseyite but more of an ex- or anti-Puseyite, but his partisan slanting of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* could only rub salt into a wound. The Christian Literature Publishing Company planned this American edition without consulting

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁹¹ Donaldson, *The Westminster Confession...* (London, 1905), 149-68.

⁹² Pfaff, "Anglo-American...", 45, 44. For a more recent reference to Coxe's "long – one may say happily – unread 'elucidations' to the American edition", as properly belonging "to the nineteenth-century history of Anglican theology", see L.G. Patterson in *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 7 (1999), 623-4.

T&T Clark, who found themselves forced into a negotiating mode to salvage the best financial compensation they could wring from the new Company. The alternative was blatant piracy, for the American firm was not to be deterred by Clark's protests. The language of the exchanges did not deal in diplomatic niceties. The Clarks, good Presbyterians that they were, "could not understand as they said in a private letter to Philip Schaff, "how *Christian* men – with Bishop Coxe at their head – could do such a thing. It is sheer *robbery*".⁹³ They were yet to discover that Coxe's religion was no mere Christianity.

By contrast, in the Ante-Nicene Christian Library the editorial imprint of Roberts and Donaldson is almost invisible. The most obvious exception is only too easily ascribed to Victorian prudishness, and mocked by *fin de millennium* explicitness. The American sociologist of religion, Rodney Stark, analysing *The Rise of Christianity* without recourse to the sources in the original, recorded his discovery of it.

Working with the famous ten-volume translations of *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, edited by Roberts and Donaldson, made me appreciate fully my debt to multiple translations. This was especially true as I wrote about abortion, birth control, and sexual norms...; wherever the church fathers wrote candidly on these matters, the Roberts and Donaldson version translated the original Greek into Latin rather than into English. Reading Clement of Alexandria, for example, one encounters frequent blocks of type in Latin ... I discovered that this was a very old tradition. Hence Edward Gibbon reported in his *Autobiography* that "my English text is chaste, all licentious passages are left in the obscurity of a learned language".... Fortunately for those of us for whom learned languages are obscure, there exist more recent translations, written by scholars having less refined sensibilities than Gibbon or the Victorian gentlemen from Edinburgh.⁹⁴

Stark is incorrect in a couple of points. The Library resorts to Latin instead of English only with Clement of Alexandria – a few pages in the *Paidagogus* but a whole book of more than fifty pages in the

⁹³ Dempster, T. & T. Clark Story, 114, cf. 112-15.

⁹⁴ Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity* (Princeton, 1996), xiii-xiv.

Stromateis. The Latin is not a fresh version but derived from Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* (which throughout its more than two hundred volumes gives a Latin translation alongside the Greek). In the *Paidagogus* a footnote states that "For obvious reasons, we have given the greater part of this chapter in the Latin version", but for the longer Latin block in a later volume "After much consideration, the Editors have deemed it best to give the whole of this Book in Latin".⁹⁵ Yet there are grounds for suspecting that the translator, and not the editors, is responsible for this outcome. The extent of the material made it inevitable that the editors should take the final decision, but the restriction of this practice to only one Father and only one translator, of a piety notable for its sensitivity and "healthfulness",⁹⁶ suggests that this was his initiative and not a matter of settled editorial policy. There were, after all, passages in other Fathers such as Tertullian suitable, in today's classification, only for adult eyes.

Nevertheless, the resort to Latin frustrated the whole purpose of a translation. Nor was it what Owen Chadwick had in mind when he commented that 'some translations [in the ANCL] are more difficult to understand than their originals'⁹⁷ – which was patently untrue for those incompetent to read the original language in question. This wry judgement nevertheless points to a widely recognised quality of the

⁹⁵ ANCL 4 (Clement of Alexandria I), 244 n. 1; ANCL 12 (Clement II), 84 n. *. In the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, sensitive sections of Cassian's works were simply omitted.

⁹⁶ Moir on Wilson, in Wilson, "Until the Day Break", xxii.

⁹⁷ Cited by Pfaff, "Anglo-American...", 41 n. 1. The *Bookseller*, CCXCVI, 5 July 1882, 598, in noting the ANCL expressed its own notion that "patristic Latin and Greek ought to remain as it is – that, in fact, translation is hardly possible". Similar sentiments were uttered by the Tractarian divine and journalist, Thomas Mozley (1806-93), scornful that the movement's best minds were devoting their efforts "to the most laborious drudgery and most thankless of all works – Translations of the Fathers.... It is not too much to say that few of these translations are readable. Indeed, if anybody wishes to read the 'Fathers', he will find it much the better course to master the difficulty of the language and read the original, instead of labouring through a translation which is neither English nor Greek. Yet nothing else could be attempted, for exact, not to say literal, fidelity is the first rule of translation when the subject is Christian truth and morality." *Reminiscences*, 2 vols. (London, 1882), ii, 37-8.

Library in general. While this is not the place to embark on a close assessment of its merits as a translation – which would involve dealing with each translator’s work individually – we should remind ourselves of the objectives set out in the Prospectus for the series. They amount to a commitment above all to a literal rendering of the original. The translators would make it

their first and principal aim to produce translations as faithful as possible...to place the English reader in the position of those acquainted with the original languages. They will indicate important variations in the text; they will give different translations of the same passage ... they will note the various meanings attributed to the words ... and when the ancient documents appear in widely different forms, the various forms will be presented.

Elegance would be pursued only so far as was consistent with “this strict accuracy and faithfulness”.

One qualified assessor’s verdict on William Wilson’s rendering of Clement of Alexandria attests its success in satisfying differing criteria.

I have been struck with the singular felicity of the phrases the translator uses. It is rarely that accuracy is found so happily combined with elegance, force and vigour with beauty of expression. His thorough command of a pure and idiomatic English style, joined to his knowledge of the original, eminently qualified him for the task of translation.⁹⁸

Several of the comments of reviewers from a broad ecclesiastical and intellectual spectrum appended first to volume 4 in 1867 highlighted the quality of “faithfulness”.

The translation, so far as we have tested it, and that is pretty widely, appears to be thoroughly faithful and honest...the critical care with which the translations have been prepared.... The translations ..., as far as we have had opportunity of judging, are fairly executed.... The translation is at once good and faithful.... The translations are, ... in

⁹⁸ The judgement of W. Millar Nicolson (on whom see Ewing, *Annals*, i, 283) cited by Moir in Wilson, “Until the Day Break”, xxiv n. (cf. vi).

respect of all places that we have carefully examined, thoroughly satisfactory for exact truth and happy expressiveness.... The translation is well executed, perspicuously and faithfully, so far as we have examined.⁹⁹

These were, to be sure, the publishers' selection, yet we need not pretend that it was wholly representative of the reception of the early volumes in noting that they failed to elicit the critical acerbity meted out to the beginnings of the Library of the Fathers by an anonymous writer in the *Dublin Review*. The reviewer concludes that, given the translator's more than unusual inattentiveness to precision in the execution of his task, the volume (Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catecheses*) will nevertheless be useful for "pious reading".¹⁰⁰

The editorial prescription for the ANCL may in some parts of some volumes have issued, perhaps inescapably, in the outcome Chadwick disdains. It is of course a moot point whether a translator should render a text in the receptor language more smoothly or unambiguously than it reads in the original. On the whole the ANCL translators enabled readers to be aware of the uncertainties of the original tongue, and refrained from kitting out the English with more than minimal annotation. Pfaff speaks felicitously of the "taciturn" quality of the series, with brief introductions in most volumes and sparse footnotes, nearly always confined to necessary identifications of references and textual or translational questions.¹⁰¹ This reticence in supplementing the English text with an evaluative apparatus – the elements of a commentary – contributes to the wide acceptability of the ANCL. Another dimension to this is its inclusive completeness of contents, which Pfaff deservedly commends.¹⁰² The collection needed only the systematic rearrangement effected for the American edition to cap its serviceability – although the Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes were in every material respect, as too were those of the Library of the Fathers, markedly inferior to the Ante-Nicene Christian Library with its firm bindings and handsomely embossed covers.

⁹⁹ Reprinted also at the end of volume 13 (1869).

¹⁰⁰ *Dublin Review* 7 (1839), 1-36, at 36.

¹⁰¹ Pfaff, "Anglo-American...", 40.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 43-4.

So this English version of the Christian writings of the first three centuries, despite issuing “from a quarter so totally unexpected”, proved to have a catholic appeal second to none. It could be cited, along with the Augustine series, by the *Bookseller* in 1882 as disproving the supposition that all of T&T Clark’s productions were “Lutheran, Presbyterian, or of any other narrow character”.¹⁰³ It is indeed with the publisher that we may best begin in seeking to understand why nineteenth-century Scotland should be so fruitful in patristic texts.¹⁰⁴ Philip Schaff, editor of the USA-originated Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, personalised the publisher’s contribution:

In 1866, Mr T Clark, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and an Elder in the Free Church of Scotland, who has done more than any publisher for the introduction of German and other foreign theological literature to the English reading community, began to issue the valuable “*Ante-Nicene Christian Library*”.¹⁰⁵

It was in fact the first Thomas Clark (1799-1865), founder of the bookselling and publishing firm in 1821, who initiated the translation of German works with the Biblical Cabinet series in 1832. Its enhancement into the Foreign Theological Library, which began appearing in 1846, is usually viewed as the firstfruits of the assumption of the younger Thomas Clark (1823-1900), nephew of the founder, into partnership in 1846 in what now became T&T Clark.¹⁰⁶ The second Thomas Clark presided over the remarkable growth in the firm over the next forty years until 1886, when he retired in favour of his son, John Maurice Clark (1859-1923). It may well be to Thomas Clark,

¹⁰³ *Bookseller*, CCXCVI, 5 July 1882, 596-8, at 598. This article on T&T Clark was also printed separately, *The Publishing House of T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1882), 20 pp.

¹⁰⁴ In welcoming the Additional Volume (1897) in the *Critical Review*, 7 (1897), 91-2, the editor, S.D.F. Salmond, commented on the 24-volume series as “carried out in a way that reflected great credit on Scotch enterprise and Scotch scholarship”. He was, of course, a translator!

¹⁰⁵ *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* I, vi.

¹⁰⁶ Dempster, *T. & T. Clark Story*, 77, 7: a new and enlarged series of the Biblical Cabinet had been announced in 1844 and was subsumed into the Foreign Theological Library. See Dempster, *T. & T. Clark Story*, 3-9, on the era of the two Thomas Clarks.

rather than to either editor, that the credit for initiating the ANCL should belong. This would help to explain why Alexander Roberts, chiefly a New Testament scholar but a Free Churchman like Clark, was the senior editor rather than James Donaldson, who was much more a student of the early Fathers.

Thomas Clark attended the Royal High School in Edinburgh a couple of decades before Donaldson's time there. He rose to become one of the most eminent of Edinburgh's citizens. While Lord Provost (from 1885) he chaired the Edinburgh International Exhibition of 1886, for which Queen Victoria made him a baronet. Schools, libraries, the University, Royal Infirmary, Chamber of Commerce and Royal Society all engaged his energies and honoured his commitment. But more significantly for our purposes, he was an ardent supporter of the Free Church of Scotland.¹⁰⁷

The Clark family belonged to Lady Glenorchy's Church from the last decades of the long ministry of Thomas Snell Jones (1779-1837), whose colleagues briefly included James Begg (1830-31). Session Clerk for Jones's last twenty years (and for three decades to come) was James Bonar, whose three ministerial brothers were Horatius, Andrew and John. The Church from 1774 stood in what is now the eastern approach to Waverley Station. At the Disruption in 1843, the minister and all but a handful of the congregation sided with the Free Church, and early in 1844 had to leave the building (which later that year was gobbled up by the North British Railway). Its new home in Greenside Place was opened in 1846 in the building that in its final ecclesial incarnation was Hillside Church of Scotland (1956-78).¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ On Clark see *Who Was Who, 1897-1916*; *Scotsman*, 25 Dec. 1900, 4; *Missionary Record of the United Free Church of Scotland*, 3 (March 1901), 136-7; Dempster, 5-7; James Harvey, *In Memoriam. Sir Thomas Clark, Baronet, D.L., F.R.S.E., etc.* (privately, Edinburgh, 1900). I am grateful to Mr T.G. Ramsay D. Clark, great-grandson of Sir Thomas and partner in the firm 1956-87 (see Dempster, *T. & T. Clark Story*, xvi, 251-64), for loaning me his copy of this.

¹⁰⁸ On this and the following paragraph, see G.W. Harvey, *Lady Glenorchy's North Church 1846-1946* (Edinburgh, 1946); D.P. Thomson, *Lady Glenorchy and Her Churches* (Crieff, 1967), 66-73; A.I. Dunlop, *The Kirks of Edinburgh 1560-1984* (Scottish Record Society, n.s., 15-16; Edinburgh, 1988), 135ff., 369ff.; Dempster, *T. & T. Clark Story*, 6, 9.

Thomas Clark became a deacon in Lady Glenorchy's Free Church in 1844 and was an elder from 1858 until his death on Christmas Eve 1900. He was active in both congregation, for example as superintendent of the Sunday School, and the courts and committees of the wider Free Church. He served on the Assembly's Continental Committee for many years from 1865, was elected a General Trustee in 1883 and in 1888 was a member of eight Assembly-appointed bodies. In 1851 he married Eliza Maule, the eldest daughter of the congregation's long-serving minister, George Ramsay Davidson (1842-90). Their elder son, John Maurice Clark, in turn also took a Free Church manse daughter to wife. Members of the family continued their service in the United Free Church, which Sir Thomas warmly greeted. He was able in his last year briefly to attend the Union Assembly of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches.

Not surprisingly, the writings of Free Churchmen featured prominently on T&T Clark's lists. Whether intercourse with any of the illustrious ranks of the early Free Church's theological teachers prepared fertile ground for the Ante-Nicene Christian Library in Thomas Clark's mind we cannot say. There remains scope for investigation of the place of the Fathers in the theological thought of leading Free Church teachers. One well-known incident suggests that the unexpected may await discovery. In 1876, thirty years after his defection to Rome, John Henry Newman told his three Free Church visitors, Alexander Whyte, Marcus Dods and George Webster Thomson, that they belonged to "a very learned and a very open-minded Church". When they modestly demurred, Newman insisted on his opinion. It was based on his being pipped to the post by William Cunningham's acquisition for the library of the "new college" of the Free Church of the sixty-volume *Acta Sanctorum* compiled by the Bollandists. Newman had been given a £100 note for his birthday (so Whyte reported) and set his heart on this item in a London bookseller's catalogue. Even if Cunningham had donations to hand to fund the purchase, his action betokens a budgetary priority not normally associated with the new-born Free Church.¹⁰⁹ In fact Cunningham's

¹⁰⁹ G.F. Barbour, *The Life of Alexander Whyte D.D.* (London, 1923), 194-5. The details as given in Newman's correspondence at the time with Edward Lowth Badeley, friend and legal adviser, differ not a little (the £100 was a bequest from John William Bowden, but not enough to purchase what had

purchase took place in November 1844, the year in which he became the Free Church's first professor of Theology, when the building of New College was but a glint in the eye. It was Edward Badeley, Newman's counsellor on book-buying, who revealed to him the identity of the purchaser of the *Acta Sanctorum*.

You will be amused to learn that it is gone to the Library of the *Free Kirk* at Edinburgh!! These Free Kirkites, strange to say, having shewn a strong desire to possess a good collection of the *Fathers, and of the mediaeval writers!*

Badeley reported the bookseller's regret that the set had "fallen into such hands".¹¹⁰ More suggestively, another writer was prompted to ask

Was this broadening of interests in the Free Kirk an indirect result of the Oxford Movement, or was it part of the same spirit of revolt against the flats and shoals of the eighteenth

been Robert Southey's set of the *Acta Sanctorum*, for which the bookseller wanted £130). Newman told Badeley he was "sorry to hear where it is gone". See *Correspondence of John Henry Newman with John Keble and Others*, edited at the Birmingham Oratory (London, 1917), 337-8, 340, 343-5. The accession is recorded in terms of light relief in the Curators' Minute Book 1844-64 in New College Library (MS. AA.2.1.81) for 20 Dec. 1844: "It may be remembered that during the course of last session Dr Welsh exhibited a jocularly expressed desire that the Library should possess a copy of a gigantic work called 'Acta Sanctorum', consisting of fifty-two folio volumes, the value of which was estimated at One Hundred and Thirty Pounds. At the meeting of last General Assembly the expression of the same wish occasioned as universal a smile among the ministers as it had previously done among the students of the Free Church, all, doubtless, except the Reverend Doctor himself, viewing the work in question as among the possessions of Utopia. Yet strange to tell, the summer months had not passed away before a beautiful copy of the 'Acts of the Saints' was bought with a contribution transmitted for the express purpose by a generous individual, who has modestly concealed his name." Speculation that the donor was Macfie must be resisted.

¹¹⁰ Badeley to Newman, 15 Nov. 1844. I am most grateful to Gerard Tracey, Archivist of The Oratory and editor of Newman's Letters and Diaries, for providing me with a copy of this unpublished letter and of other material on the episode.

century, which was one of the contributory causes of the Oxford Movement?¹¹¹

Alexander Roberts studied at New College during 1849-52 under Cunningham. Although no evidence links Cunningham specifically to the ANCL (he died in 1861), his lectures on church history, which he treated as historical theology, included some carefully differentiated judgements on the Christian writers of the first three centuries. They were, of course, individually or collectively, not inspired, and hence possessed no authority whatsoever. Nor were they "in general judicious or accurate interpreters of Scripture". Most of them gave "interpretations of important scriptural statements" which no one now entertained. Nor did they transmit any apostolic tradition not contained in Scripture on which any reliance could be placed. Although there was some truth in the notion "that the fact of a doctrine or system of doctrines having been held by the early church, afforded *some* presumption that it had been taught by the apostles", yet Cunningham claimed that this abstract position was nullified by "the actual realities of the case". Greater caution and circumspection were called for, given the scantiness of the remains of the writings and documents of the first three centuries. The gradual change that was evident in doctrine, church government and worship during this period was "generally in an unsound direction".¹¹²

Such considerations in Cunningham's book counted decisively against the claims of the papists, who are ever in his sights. But on one particular subject, the witness of the first three centuries provided

¹¹¹ "This at all events seems certain. The reaction against the Victorian age, about which we hear so much, seems child's play compared with the revolt against the eighteenth century, which was a characteristic feature of the first half of the nineteenth." Anon., "The Library of the Birmingham Oratory" (continued), *The Oratory School Magazine*, 76 (May, 1929), 1-3, at 3 (kindly supplied by Gerard Tracey). This article is largely devoted to Newman's abortive interest in Southey's set. The writer comments that "Newman seems to have repented all his life of having missed Southey's copy of the Bollandists" (2).

¹¹² William Cunningham, *Historical Theology*, 2 vols. (1862; r.p., London, 1960), i, 175-8. It was Professor Stewart J. Brown who suggested Cunningham to me as a possible stimulator of interest in the Fathers in the early Free Church of Scotland.

almost unqualified support for Protestantism against popery in clear distinction from the fourth and succeeding centuries. This was idolatry. Although in the third century “there were plain traces of undue and extravagant honours being paid to martyrs and confessors” which were “wrong and injurious”, there was “no evidence of the existence during this period of anything in doctrine or practice that was justly chargeable with being idolatrous or polytheistic”, such as Protestants heavily charged against Romish “worship paid to angels, saints, and images, and the adoration of the host”. What helped to preserve the pre-Constantinian church from idolatry was its open conflict with idolatrous paganism, which came to an end in the fourth century, and then the Satanic rot set in.¹¹³

Cunningham gives extensive coverage to the teachings of the Apostolic Fathers and church writers of the second and third centuries.¹¹⁴ One can but conclude that, if New College Library needed the *Acta Sanctorum*, it would warmly welcome a full scholarly translation of the ante-Nicene Christian corpus. The kind of theological temper fostered by Cunningham’s lectures was certainly propitious to such an undertaking, and perhaps something similar may prove attributable to lesser lights in the Free Church’s educational firmament. One might suggest that, for all the stridency of the Ten Years’ Conflict, nothing much rested for the Scottish church on the voice of the Fathers. Paradoxically, it was in the more detached scholarly setting of the Scottish Free Church, whose theological seminaries rapidly attained world ranking, and not in virulently polemical Oxford, that the Ante-Nicene Christian writers could be allowed to speak English without fear or favour. More generally, James Harvey claimed in his memorial sermon for Sir Thomas Clark that “his business enterprise did much indirectly to give the Free Church of Scotland a foremost place in the theological world of to-day”.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Cunningham, *ibid.*, i, 196-201. A not dissimilar differentiation between the pre-Nicene and the post-Nicene centuries is discernible in Cunningham’s critique of Newman’s essay on development: Cunningham, *Works*, 4 vols. (Edinburgh, 1863), iv, 35-77, at 40-45 (reprinted from the *North British Review* of August 1846).

¹¹⁴ *Historical Theology*, i, 94-171.

¹¹⁵ Harvey, *In Memoriam*, 27. Cf. 5: “When the history of Scottish theology in the nineteenth century comes to be written, it will be found that the labours

Whether significant personal connexions can be established between Thomas Clark, Alexander Roberts, William Cunningham and others, further enquiry may ascertain. I leave it to others much more at home in nineteenth-century Scottish national and ecclesiastical life to draw out the wider importance of the Ante-Nicene Christian Library and similar grand ventures by T&T Clark.¹¹⁶ What light it throws on the intellectual vitality of post-Disruption Scotland or of Edinburgh in particular as the Geneva of the English-speaking Reformed world wiser minds must determine. Certainly in the age of the internet and the WorldWideWeb, ANCL is alive and well.

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of Messrs T. & T. Clark have contributed greatly in extending its horizon and shaping its course, and, to some extent, in moulding its character.”

¹¹⁶ Harvey, *In Memoriam*, 10, quotes from a tribute to Sir Thomas Clark by James Hastings, that “incomparable encyclopaedist”: “Scotland probably owes him more than can ever be acknowledged. For Scotland has passed through a great theological crisis with extraordinary ease and benefit, and the steady evangelical, yet never intolerant hand that more than any other guided the theological reading of Scotland these trying years had not a little to do with it. And not Scotland only.”

